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DEPT FOR T, VC AND EUR/PRA
DOE FOR NNSA/NA-24
CIA FOR WINPAC
JCS FOR J5/DDGSA
SECDEF FOR OSD(P)/STRATCAP
NAVY FOR CNO-N5JA AND DIRSSP
AIRFORCE FOR HQ USAF/ASX AND ASXP
DTRA FOR OP-OS OP-OSA AND DIRECTOR
NSC FOR LOOK
DIA FOR LEA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/28/2019

TAGS: [KACT](#) [MARR](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [RS](#) [US](#) [START](#)

SUBJECT: START FOLLOW-ON NEGOTIATIONS, GENEVA (SFO-GVA-VI):
(U) AD HOC WORKING GROUP MEETING, OCTOBER 21, 2009

Classified By: A/S Rose E. Gottemoeller, United States
START Negotiator. Reasons: 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (U) This is SFO-GVA-VI-009.

¶2. (U) Meeting Date: October 21, 2009
Time: 10:00 A.M. - 12:20 P.M.
Place: U.S. Mission, Geneva

SUMMARY

¶3. (S) At the first Ad Hoc Group meeting chaired by Secretary of Defense Representative Dr. Warner and Russian Deputy Head of Delegation Colonel Ilin, the majority of the meeting was dedicated to the discussion of counting rules related to the Russian-proposed limit on deployed and non-deployed ICBM and SLBM launchers. The Russian Delegation stated the limit was necessary to demonstrate the resolve of the Parties in negotiating a treaty with meaningful reductions. The Russian side believed the limit provided a means to control the other Party's upload potential.

¶4. (S) The sides also had a short exchange on counting rules related to heavy bomber nuclear armaments. The U.S. side stated that declaration and verification of deployed heavy bomber nuclear armaments was required to give any credibility to reductions proposed in the new treaty. In the Russian view, declaration and verification of these weapons was not necessary since it was the upload potential of the bomber that was important.

15. (U) SUBJECT SUMMARY: New Meeting Format of the Ad Hoc Group to Promote Discussion and Solution Identification; Separate Limit on Non-deployed ICBM and SLBM Launchers; Non-deployed Systems of Concern are not the Caretaker MIIII and PK Silos; Dropping Third Limit; Did Strategic Plans Drive Arms Control or Arms Control Drive Strategic Plans; Force Structure is not a Military Decision Alone; NPR Process Education; Upload Potential as Related to Russian Method of Counting HB Warheads; Can't Forget the Effect of BMD on the SDV Limit; and, Re-Direct to Counting LRNA.

NEW MEETING FORMAT OF
THE AD HOC GROUP TO
PROMOTE DISCUSSION AND
SOLUTION IDENTIFICATION

16. (S) Dr. Warner began the meeting stating that A/S Gottemoeller and Ambassador Antonov agreed that a meeting in this format was a means for delegation members to discuss the more difficult issues that faced the Parties. Meetings of this type would help identify key problems and possible solutions and gain a better insight into the thinking of the sides. Colonel Ilin agreed that the forum provided a means for productive discussion of issues of a delicate nature. He clarified that any agreements reached during these meetings would have to go to the Heads of Delegation for approval.

SEPARATE LIMIT ON NON-DEPLOYED
ICBM AND SLBM LAUNCHERS

17. (S) In an attempt to demonstrate that the Russian-proposed limit on both deployed and non-deployed launchers would actually have an opposite effect on what was intended, Warner walked the Russian side through an example in which this limit was raised to a higher number. Using a hypothetical aggregate limit of 900 SDVs and an aggregate ceiling of 1000 deployed and non-deployed ICBM and SLBM launchers, Warner demonstrated that, for the United States and to a greater extent for the Russian Federation, combined limits of 900 and a 1000 in the manner proposed by the Russian side resulted in a situation where both sides would have "headroom" to deploy hundreds of non-deployed ICBM and SLBM launchers. These numbers would be so high that such a "third limit" would have no effect in constraining either side.

18. (S) Ilin stated Warner's analysis was correct but that, nevertheless, it demonstrated the need for meaningful limits on non-deployed missiles. Such a limit was needed to place a limit on non-deployed ICBM and SLBM launchers because these launchers could be mated with non-deployed missiles located at storage facilities. When one considered that warheads were also stored relatively close to these non-deployed launchers and missiles, a potential upload scenario was created. This upload potential could raise the level of that Party's deployed SDVs.

19. (S) Mr. Elliott asked Ilin what systems he envisioned would pose the greatest threat for potential upload. The practices of both sides resulted in there being a small number of SSBNs in port for extended maintenance overhaul at all times. While technically these submarines could be uploaded with missiles and sent back to sea, both sides understood it was necessary to have a small number of submarines in such overhaul with their SLBMs removed to support an operational submarine fleet. Both sides also understood that each side had accumulated empty ICBM silos that, due to the permissive SNDV limit under START, were emptied of missiles, but then maintained in that condition rather than being eliminated. To Elliott it seemed that creating a large limit on non-deployed silo launchers under START Follow-on (SFO) would encourage continuation of this situation.

NON-DEPLOYED SYSTEMS OF
CONCERN ARE NOT THE CARE-
TAKER MMIII AND PK SILOS

¶10. (S) Ilin stated that the empty, non-operational U.S. Peacekeeper and Minutemen III (MMIII) silos were not the launchers of concern. The D-5 missiles in the 24 SLBM launchers on the 12 operational U.S. Trident SSBNs posed the greatest possibility of potential upload. The SLBMs in these launchers could be loaded with over 2000 warheads. The Duma was well aware of this fact and believed that the two SSBNs in port for extended overhaul were also available for rapid upload. Ilin cited a famous Russian short story which says, "if a loaded rifle is on the wall, sooner or later it will be fired." The Duma believes that sooner or later an SSBN in

port will be reloaded with missiles. Ilin reiterated that non-deployed missiles in storage plus warheads in storage equaled upload potential.

¶11. (S) General Orlov asked whether the choice to maintain empty silos rather than eliminate them was due to cost considerations or operational reasons. Elliott replied that avoiding unneeded costs was the key factor and, with a higher SDV limit and a higher associated ICBM and SLBM launcher limit, it would be easier and cheaper to maintain the empty silos rather than to eliminate them. Given a lower limit it would be better to spend the money to eliminate such empty silos. Warner clarified that the U.S. ICBM silos in question were the silos that had been empty for several years, with critical components removed, and they were already in a degraded condition and, thus, not capable of launching an ICBM.

¶12. (S) Mr. Koshelev asked whether the United States had any operational silo launchers that were currently empty, but in which the United States had plans to re-install ICBMs. Warner responded in the negative.

DROPPING THIRD LIMIT

¶13. (S) Mr. Trout said that the United States understood the Russian concern that the 50 empty Peacekeeper and 50 empty MMIII silos would be considered to be in non-deployed status according to the Russian approach. He offered that with the proposed simplified elimination procedures, the United States planned to eliminate these silos within the seven-year time period required to reach the SDV limit under the new SFO Treaty. If the sides could look to the time when these Peacekeeper and MMIII silos were eliminated, then the U.S. phrase "deployed ICBMs and their associated launchers" would provide more incentive to eliminate such launchers than the Russian use of the terms "deployed launchers" and "non-deployed launchers." If the Russian terms were accepted, a Party could simply declare non-operational silos as non-deployed launchers and not eliminate them. Trout asked if the Parties could resolve the issue of these non-operational silos, would Russia consider dropping the need for its third limit on deployed and non-deployed ICBM and SLBM launchers.

¶14. (S) Ilin responded that Russia had added the third limit not only to capture these silo launchers, but to count and include all launchers in a non-deployed status to include test and training ICBM silo launchers, SSBNs in extended overhaul, and newly-launched SSBNs that had not yet been loaded with SLBMs.

DID STRATEGIC PLANS DRIVE
ARMS CONTROL OR ARMS CONTROL
DRIVE STRATEGIC PLANS

¶15. (S) Colonel Ryzhkov posed a question from the perspective of a U.S. staff officer serving in the Pentagon. He asked whether the United States planned to adapt its national policy on strategic nuclear forces to the SFO Treaty

or adapt its arms control stance to the demands of its national strategic policy. Warner said it was a little of both. The goal of the on-going Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) was to link force structure to future national security needs and in the context of the anticipated international political and military setting. In addition, President Obama had made clear he wanted reduced reliance on nuclear weapons in the U.S. national security policy. The President had also instructed his national security team to negotiate with Russia to reduce SDVs and weapons within the SFO Treaty and to develop an appropriate force structure that would meet both objectives. The SFO Treaty with Russia was to be a key factor in shaping this force structure.

¶16. (S) Ryzhkov said he interpreted this as the United States wanting more flexibility with regard to its strategic nuclear forces. Warner explained that, due to the historical evolution of its strategic forces, the United States had a sense for the minimum number of SSBNs and associated SLBM launchers it required and the size of its silo-based ICBM force which, by the way, was to be entirely de-MIRVed. The United States also planned to maintain a small number of B-2s and some number of B-52Hs with a nuclear mission. Re-focusing the discussion back to its original topic, Warner said it was this sense of the appropriate minimum number of ICBMs, SLBMs and heavy bombers the United States believed must be included in its future strategic force that made it impossible for the United States to consider a 500 SDV limit or anywhere close to a 500 SDV limit.

FORCE STRUCTURE IS NOT A
MILITARY DECISION ALONE

¶17. (S) Elliott said there was as well the proverbial "elephant in the room" regarding the size and shape of U.S. strategic forces. The U.S. Congress would have a strong voice in the decisions made as the Obama Administration developed a future force structure that balanced both the demands of the national security policy and the limits negotiated in an SFO Treaty. While it seemed easy for the Department of Defense to decide to reduce the ICBM force, politically, one had to consider the economic effect this reduction would have in the States where the reduction would take place. Any such reduction would be a significant step since these MMIII ICBMs had not come to the end of their service life. If the United States were to build a force structure to match a level of 1500 warheads, it could build it with far fewer ICBM silo launchers than presently exists. However, the congressional politics associated with cutting back U.S. ICBM launchers would help shape the size of that component of the U.S. triad.

NPR PROCESS EDUCATION

¶18. (S) Keeping with this same line of questioning, Mr. Venevtsev asked whether the U.S. actually had a force structure in mind, since the NPR process drove force structure and it was not scheduled to be completed until early next year. Venevtsev also asked if the analysis within the NPR would be classified. Warner noted that the NPR

review process had not yet been completed, but was to be completed in December and presented to Congress in February. The main issue that remained relevant to the SFO Treaty negotiations was the matter of conventionally-armed ICBMs and SLBMs and that decision was coming soon. NPR analysis completed in the late spring had provided the basis for the U.S. proposals in SFO to set the deployed strategic nuclear

warhead limit at 1500 and the limit on strategic nuclear delivery vehicles at 1100. As for classification of the NPR work, Warner stated that the analysis done in support of the NPR was classified, but there was a commitment to publish a substantial unclassified NPR report. The Russian side seemed satisfied with this explanation.

UPLOAD POTENTIAL AS
RELATED TO RUSSIAN METHOD
OF COUNTING HB WARHEADS

¶19. (S) Trout stated the United States understood that Russia proposed to only count nuclear warheads actually loaded on its heavy bombers. Since it was not the practice of each Party to keep nuclear warheads loaded on heavy bombers on a day-to-day basis, the heavy bomber nuclear warheads declared by each Party would consequently be zero. Assuming the treaty was submitted for ratification, Trout asked how the Russian Government would explain to the Duma the fact that it had an arms control treaty that did not limit heavy bomber nuclear warheads. Ilin answered with a reference back to upload potential. For Russia, there was no critical importance placed on the number of heavy bomber warheads either Party declared. What was important was potential upload capability. As was stated earlier, the process and principle of upload potential was the same for all types of strategic offensive arms (SOAs). The location of the warheads to be uploaded was not important, nor was the speed of the process, just the fact of the upload potential was of critical significance. Tying his answer back to the crisis scenarios that had been presented earlier by Warner, Ilin said what was of primary importance to Russia was the potential for the United States to openly upload its strategic forces over what might be an extended period and then to possibly create a crisis situation.

CAN'T FORGET THE EFFECT
OF BMD ON THE SDV LIMIT

¶20. (S) Orlov asked what effect the U.S. ballistic missile defense (BMD) capabilities would have on the size of its strategic nuclear forces within the SDV limit. He also questioned the need for a higher SDV limit when a Party possessed a successful BMD system. He understood from comments by MDA's LTG O'Reilly, in his presentation to the Russians the previous week in Moscow, that the United States was developing a substantial BMD system.

¶21. (S) Warner said there was no connection between U.S. BMD efforts and the plans for the size and character of U.S. strategic nuclear forces. The combination of the BMD system planned for phased deployment in Europe and the few tens of BMD interceptors deployed in Alaska and California were

designed to protect against the emerging ICBM threat from North Korea and Iran. BMD considerations had no connection to the U.S.-proposed SDV limit. Again attempting to drag the discussion into the interrelationship between strategic offensive and defensive arms, Orlov asked how the U.S. Navy's future BMD capabilities would affect SDV levels. Warner explained that, to date, the Navy's systems were for theater missile defense and that would remain the case for many years. Ilin asked whether the United States had plans to expand this into a strategic BMD capability, to which Warner responded that this was a theoretical possibility, however, there were no plans to do so.

RE-DIRECT TO COUNTING LRNA

¶22. (s) Elliott said he wanted to leave the Russian side with something to consider regarding the U.S. proposal for counting heavy bomber nuclear armaments. He stated that the

United States had given much thought to this issue and had developed verification procedures that were in no way an insignificant concession on the part of the U.S. military. The approach required a balance of transparency with the natural desire of the military to maintain the security of its nuclear weapons. In the end, senior military leaders were convinced of the value of transparency on the part of both Parties. The U.S. military leadership had agreed to open the doors to its most closely-protected weapons. As such, the United States asked Russia to consider a reciprocal approach in the hope of continuing to implement the needed transparency between the two countries.

¶23. (S) Ilin said that Elliott was correct in stating that a Party must balance transparency with the concerns of the military for the nation's security. He understood that we had convinced our military leadership that transparency would get them something in return. He asked what our military leadership expected to get in return for transparency on Russian heavy bomber bases. Since both Parties proposed heavy bomber inspection procedures and both Parties agreed there were no nuclear weapons uploaded on their bombers, he questioned the need to have access to nuclear armament weapons storage areas on the heavy bomber bases to count such weapons.

¶24. (S) Elliott stated, as he had done previously, that both Parties would have no credibility if they did not declare the armaments readily available to arm their heavy bombers. He noted he understood that Russia and the United States used different methods to store their long-range nuclear ALCMs (LRNA) and, in the U.S. case, its nuclear bombs. Whereas the United States stored its ALCMs with their nuclear warheads inserted within them in the weapons storage area on the bomber base, Russia stored its warheads in a special storage area at a location that was separate from the storage area where its ALCM bodies were stored. The United States was willing to count Russian ALCM bodies as the means to confirm Russia's declared numbers of nuclear armaments for heavy bombers. The United States understood that a warhead could not get to a target without the ALCM body and was willing to consider this relationship when verifying Russian heavy bomber nuclear warhead numbers.

¶25. (S) Ryzhkov responded that the transparency regarding heavy bomber weapons offered by the United States gave nothing to Russia. The number of heavy bomber warheads was irrelevant because these warheads could be easily transported to a base for upload. Elliott countered saying that, under U.S. procedures, excess cruise missiles would be stored at a great distance from the heavy bomber base, would be stored in containers rather than on pylons and rotary launchers, and cruise missile warheads would be stored separately at storage facilities hundreds of miles away. Return time would be counted in months rather than in weeks. In contrast, were the United States to follow the Russian proposal for heavy bomber nuclear armaments, U.S. heavy bomber weapons would be retained in the weapons storage areas at the bomber bases in unlimited numbers and could be uploaded in a matter of hours, or at most a day or so.

¶26. (S) Both Warner and Ilin agreed that this had been a productive format in which to discuss issues. Both agreed to keep the agenda to one issue for up-coming meetings of the Ad Hoc Group.

¶27. (U) Documents exchanged. None.

¶28. (U) Participants:

U.S.

Dr. Warner
Mr. Elliott
Mr. Hanchett
Amb Ries
Mr. Siemon
Mr. Trout

Dr. Hopkins (Int)

RUSSIA

Col Ilin

Mr. Koshelev

Gen Orlov

Mr. Poznihir

Col Ryzhkov

Mr. Venevtsev

Mr. Gayduk (Int)

[129.](#) (U) Gottemoeller sends.

GRIFFITHS